

MACAULAY'S CHARACTER OF WILLIAM III
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the 6,000 auxiliaries the treaties ¹ between
England and
Holland provided.

On February 13 the Convention offered the
crown to
William and Mary and they accepted it.
Next day
William announced his acceptance of the
crown to Waldeck
in the following terms :

I wished not to delay in informing you that
after the
petition which Parliament has made to ask me
to be their
King, I have accepted and we have just been
proclaimed.
I assure you it is no light burden, and I
considered it
thoroughly, but could not exempt myself.

Later he added :

I imagine that you know me well enough to
believe that
the lustre of a crown does not dazzle me. If
it had not
been absolutely necessary I should not have
accepted it
—as those who have been here can witness
—and unless
I was willing to lose everything I could not
have acted
otherwise.²

Doubtless these utterances represent the
real facts of the
case. The paramount consideration with
William was that
the resources of England could not be
utilised in the
struggle for European independence unless he
became king.
Neither as regent nor as prince consort would
he have
possessed adequate power to guide the
course of public
affairs in England. Even as king he had
immense diffi-
culties to combat. He was at first hopeful
that his task
would be easier than he originally thought.

He was able to send a number of regiments³ back to Holland and to promise more, but events moved very slowly in England

¹These were the treaty of Mar. 1678, and three earlier ones, renewed on Aug. 7-17, 1685.

²Miiller, ii. 137, 139.

³See above, p. 155.